CLAIMS

**What is claimed is:**

5  1.   A data management system, comprising:

a processor; and

first and second ports;

wherein the processor is programmed to transmit a

first controller handshake signal through said first data

10   port, and inhibit data pass-through at said second data

port in connection with said first controller handshake

signal transmission.

2.   The system of claim 1, wherein said processor is

programmed to transmit a second controller handshake sig-

nal through said second data port to establish communica-

tion with a controller if said first handshake signal

5   does not result in communication with a controller, and

inhibit data pass-through at said first data port in con-

nection with said second controller handshake signal

transmission.

3.   The system of claim 2, further comprising:

a data hub that includes said first and second

ports.

4.   The system of claim 3, wherein said data hub com-

prises at least one switch connectable to alternately in-

hibit data pass-through at said first and second ports.

5.   The system of claim 2, wherein said processor and said first and second ports are housed in an application module.

6.   The system of claim 1, further comprising:
     a controller module in communication with said processor through said first port.

7.   The system of claim 6, further comprising:
     an application module in communication with said processor through said second port.

8.   The system of claim 7, further comprising:
     a plurality of memories detachably connected to said controller module.

9.   The system of claim 6, wherein said processor is programmed to transmit an ID request to said controller module.

10.   The system of claim 9, wherein said controller module is programmed to transmit an application ID to said processor in response to said ID request.

11.   The system of claim 10, wherein said controller module is programmed to append said application ID onto other data transmitted to said processor.

12.   A method for coordinating data flow, comprising:

transmitting a first handshake signal from a processor through a first data port to test for the presence of a controller at said first port; and

5      inhibiting data pass-through at a second data port in connection with said first handshake signal transmission.

13.  The method of claim 12, further comprising:
transmitting a second handshake signal through said second data port to test for the presence of a controller at said second data port if said first handshake signal
5   does not result in communication with a controller at said first port; and

inhibiting data pass-through at said first data port in connection with the transmission of said second handshake signal.

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14.  The method of claim 13, wherein said inhibiting of data pass-through at said first and second ports further comprises switching at least one switch in a hub that comprises said first and second ports.

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15.  The method of claim 13, further comprising:
transmitting an ID request from said processor to a controller found to be present at one of said ports.

16.  The method of claim 15, further comprising:
transmitting an application ID to said processor from said controller in response to said ID request.

17.  The method of claim 16, further comprising:

appending said application ID onto data retrieved by said controller module from a memory.

18. A data management system, comprising:

a plurality of data ports coupled to a processor;

an application module housing said processor;

wherein said processor is programmed to test for the

5 presence of a controller alternately through each of said plurality of data ports.

19. The data management system of claim 18, further comprising:

a data hub that comprises said plurality of data ports.

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20. The data management system of claim 18, further comprising:

a controller in communication with said processor through one of said plurality of data ports.

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21. The data management system of claim 20, wherein said controller is further programmed to send an application ID to said processor in response to receiving a transmission from said processor.

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22. A system configuration method, comprising:

testing for the presence of a controller through a first port using a processor; and

testing for the presence of said controller through

5 a second port if said controller is not found through said first port.

23. The method of claim 23, further comprising:
sending an ID request to said controller.

24. The method of claim 23, further comprising:
sending an application ID to said processor from
said controller;
wherein said application ID represents an electronic
address for said processor.

25. The method of claim 22, further comprising:
inhibiting data pass-through at said second port
while testing through said first port.

26. The method of claim 22,
sending an acknowledgement from said controller to
said processor.